



BAXTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

406 W. Wade Avenue, Suite 2 · Mountain Home, Arkansas 72653

Phone: 870-425-3527 · Fax: 870-424-3747 · www.baxtercountycd.com

MEMORANDUM

To: Teachers, Counselors and Youth Leaders

From: *Baxter County Conservation District*

Date: November 15, 2024

Subject: Conservation Scholarship

Enclosed is information on the 2024-2025 Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts "Dave Ferguson" Scholarship Contest. This contest will give a young person in our county the opportunity to win up to **\$500.00** towards college expenses when they choose a conservation-related course of study at an accredited Arkansas college or university. The winner will also be eligible to compete for scholarship funds at the area and state level contests.

The essay should include all four items of the following components:

2024-2025 Theme & Criteria:

Theme: *"Home is Where the Habitat Is."*

A habitat provides the essential plants and animals need to survive, like food, water, shelter, and space. Protecting habitats helps maintain healthy ecosystems.

1) Define the benefits of healthy habitat. Identify the many ways that healthy habitat affects the quality of life for people. Discuss the beneficial roles of forests in healthy condition which can be surprisingly far-reaching and enhance ecosystems, economic benefits, and benefits to the landscape.

2) Give an overview of activities that can be implemented by landowners, farmers, organizations, and others to enhance and improve their habitat.

3) Provide an actual example of a landowner/organization who has been helped by the conservation district. (May use photos & videos and district will help locate landowners, if needed)

Note: Resources are listed on the Frequently Asked Questions sheet

Baxter County Conservation District Board of Directors

Mark Keaton, Chairman · Sherrie Bufford, Secretary/Treasurer · Mel Crawford · Sally Hall · Robert Benedict

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4) Provide an actual example of a landowner/organization who has been helped by the conservation district (may use photos & videos and district will help locate landowners, if needed)

AACD Scholarship Awards:

1st Place - \$1,000 (one time award)

2nd Place - \$500 (one time award)

The enclosed information sheet and entry forms should be distributed immediately to any eligible student so they can return their entries by the deadline. The closing date for entries at the district level is **February 7, 2025**.

For more entry forms, or more information, please contact Dawn at the Baxter County Conservation District at baxtercountycd@gmail.com or 870-425-3527, Extension 3.

This is a program sponsored by your local conservation district and the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts to assist young people interested in careers in the conservation of our natural resources. We hope you will encourage participation by those in your classes or groups.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dawn M. Downing-Wahl".

Dawn M. Downing-Wahl
District Administrative Assistant/Office Manager
Baxter County Conservation District

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2024-2025
Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts
Dave Ferguson Scholarship

Frequently asked questions and answers.

Q – What do I need to cover in my essay?

A – Essay should include all four areas.

1) Define the benefits of healthy habitat. Identify the many ways that healthy forests affect the quality of life for people. Discuss the beneficial roles of habitat in healthy condition which can be surprisingly far-reaching and enhance ecosystems, economic benefits, and benefits to the landscape.

2) Give an overview of activities that can be implemented by landowners, farmers, organizations, and others to enhance and improve their resource management; soil, water, forest, etc..

3) How the conservation district can help landowners address the resource concern that results from the lack of resource management; conservation practices (talk with NRCS Staff if needed)

4) Provide an actual example of a landowner/organization who has been helped by the conservation district (May use photos & videos and district will help locate landowners, if needed)

Q – Who is eligible?

A – District residents who are currently high school sophomores, juniors, or seniors, and who have a grade point average of at least 2.5 are eligible.

Q – What is the prize structure?

A – Each district that has a scholarship program is encouraged to offer a \$250.00 scholarship. Areas are encouraged to offer a \$500.00 scholarship. Scholarships given at the district and area level are solely at the discretion of the conservation district and area leadership. AACD awards one-time scholarships of \$1,000 and \$500.

Q – What are the deadlines?

A – Districts should close their entry period on **February 7, 2025**. Applications should be received in the district offices by that date. Districts will then judge and send in the name of each winner to Area Presidents no later than **April 18, 2025**. Area contests will be decided, and winners' names sent to AACD in Little Rock by **June 13, 2025**. The Area winners will be judged by an independent body of judges with expertise in the subject matter. The State Winners will be notified by mail immediately after judging.

Q – When and how do I get my scholarship?

A – Once a student has registered at the college/university of their choice they ask the Office of Registrar to send a letter directly to AACD stating that they have been accepted for full admission. The funds are sent directly to the college/university as a credit. The funds can be used for room and board, fees & tuition, and books. Please note that we do not accept anything from the students directly. The letter must come from the Office of the Registrar and signed by the Registrar.

• Letters should be mailed to AACD, 8100 Bicentennial Rd., North Little Rock, AR 72118

Q – What can a district do to encourage student participation?

A – Use the enclosed materials to submit a news release to local newspapers and on local radio and cable TV. Contact High School Counselors, 4-H Leaders, FBLA Sponsors, FFA Sponsors, Scout Leaders, and your County Extension Agents. Mail a scholarship packet with a cover letter, flyer, and entry form to all those you contact. Place packets in the library, extension office and anywhere students might have the opportunity to pick them up.

Q – Where can I get more information?

A – There are numerous websites dedicated to watershed planning. Here are a few that might be helpful.

1) Natural Resources Conservation Service [Natural Resource Concerns | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

2) ADA – Natural Resources Division [Natural Resources - Arkansas Department of Agriculture](#)

3) ADA – Forestry Division [Forestry - Arkansas Department of Agriculture](#)

4) Arkansas Game & Fish Commission [Arkansas Game and Fish Commission | The Natural State Awaits](#)

Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts
Conservation Scholarship

Entry Form for the 2024-2025 School Year

Return this form, your essay and two letters of recommendation by February 7, 2025 to the

Baxter County Conservation District, 406 W. Wade Avenue, Suite 2, Mountain Home, AR
72653.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ **Email Address:** _____

SCHOOL GRADE: _____ **County:** **Baxter**

I certify that I am a resident of Baxter County, Arkansas, I have a grade point average of at least 2.5, and I have enclosed two letters of recommendation from responsible adults in my community.

Also, please find enclosed my essay on the topic, "***Home is Where the Habitat is***" (Minimum length 750 words).

I understand that if I win this scholarship, I am eligible for the Area Contest where I may have the opportunity to win additional scholarship funds. Furthermore, I agree to represent Baxter County Conservation District in that contest. I understand that if I win the Area Contest, I agree to represent the Area at the State Contest. I understand that I should immediately contact AACD if I voluntarily withdraw my name from consideration due to a change of plans regarding college.

Signed _____
(Student)